



**DRAFT  
MUNICIPAL PLAN  
2026-27**



**City of Palmerston acknowledges** the Larrakia people as the Traditional Custodians of the Palmerston region. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future leaders and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

City of Palmerston is committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination within our facilities and welcome all people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or faith.

*Pictured: Aboriginal culture Australia Day Recreational Centre January 2026*

*Pictured front cover: Palmerston family, attending a free event, 2025*

*Pictured back cover: Weaving International Womens Day March 2026*



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# INTRODUCTION

City of Palmerston’s Municipal Plan sets out the services, programs and initiatives to be delivered for the Palmerston community in 2026-27. It outlines how resources, including Council rates, fees and charges, will be allocated to provide essential services, deliver community events and projects, protect and enhance our natural environment, and support cultural diversity and a thriving local economy.

Our community is at the heart of everything we do. The Community Plan, created by the people of Palmerston in 2018, promotes a shared vision of Palmerston as ‘A Place for People’. This vision continues to guide Council’s strategic direction and ensures our work reflects the aspirations and priorities of our community.

As the second largest and fastest growing city in the Northern Territory, Palmerston is a dynamic regional hub with a strong future. Rapid growth brings significant opportunities but also challenges, particularly ensuring planning and decision-making carefully consider social impacts, balances sustainability with progress, supports and attracts local businesses, and makes it easy for the community to engage with Council and participate in decision-making.

Building on the strengths that make Palmerston unique and fostering innovation are essential to achieving our long-term aspirations, where Palmerston is a welcoming, vibrant family city that celebrates diversity, fosters unity and ensures everyone feels safe and included. We look forward to working closely with our community to deliver the outcomes they expect and deserve.

## COMMUNITY PLAN OUTCOMES

**01 Family and Community:** Palmerston is a safe and family-friendly community where everyone belongs.

**02 Vibrant economy:** Palmerston is a destination city for employment. It is a place where businesses are encouraged to set up and grow.

**03 Cultural diversity:** In Palmerston, we celebrate our cultures in a way that values our diversity.

**04 A Future focus:** Palmerston is an innovative city that sustains itself through the challenges of the future.

**05 Environmental sustainability:** Palmerston is an environmentally friendly, liveable city that promotes renewable practices and sustainability.

**06 Governance:** Council is trusted by the community and invests in things that the public value.

*The outcomes include the objectives we need to achieve and the ways we’ll measure our success in achieving them.*

## SNAPSHOT



POPULATION<sup>1</sup>  
**41 538**



GEOGRAPHICAL AREA  
**72 KM<sup>2</sup>**



GROSS REGIONAL  
PRODUCT<sup>2</sup>  
**\$2.28 B**



MEDIAN AGE<sup>2</sup>  
**31**



TOTAL BUDGET  
EXPENSES  
**\$54 M**

## PLANNING AND REPORTING

Local governments in the Northern Territory undertake planning and reporting activities in line with the *Local Government Act 2019 (NT)* (Local Government Act) and *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NT)* (Local Government Regulations).

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

City of Palmerston welcomes feedback from the community on the draft 2026-27 Municipal Plan and Budget. Both will be online and open for submissions from 8 April to 6 May 2026.

Council will review all submissions at its Ordinary Council Meeting on 2 June 2026 and then adopt the approved Municipal Plan before 30 June 2026, in line with the Local Government Act.

Making a submission:

**Online:** Join the conversation on Council's website <https://palmerston.nt.gov.au/your-opportunities/community-engagement>

**Email:** [governance@palmerston.nt.gov.au](mailto:governance@palmerston.nt.gov.au)

**Mail:**

Attn: Chief Executive Officer  
2026-27 Municipal Plan and Budget submission  
City of Palmerston  
PO BOX 1, Palmerston NT 0831

1 <https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=72800>

2 <https://profile.id.com.au/rda-northern-territory/highlights?WebID=200>

3 <https://economy.id.com.au/rda-northern-territory/about?WebID=200>

# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



It is a privilege to serve the Palmerston community as Mayor, and together with the Elected Members of the 11th Council we remain committed to thoughtful, long-term planning for our growing city while continuing to deliver the essential services our community relies on every day.

I am pleased to present City of Palmerston's 2026–27 Municipal Plan, which outlines our ongoing commitment to enhancing community wellbeing, supporting a thriving lifestyle and progressing the priorities set by the people of Palmerston in our Community Plan.

In 2026–27, we will continue building a city where families flourish. This includes finalising a dynamic library makeover and offering a diverse calendar of free, family-friendly events including Live at the Lake, Flicnics, the 10th anniversary of Brekkie in the Park and the much-loved Christmas Wonderland. We will also continue to support the expansion of Palmerston's cultural and music scene, championing major events and our ongoing involvement in the Darwin Festival.

Zuccoli Community Hub is developing as an integrated multipurpose community precinct designed to meet open space, recreation and community needs for the rapidly growing Zuccoli community and City of Palmerston municipality. The Stage 3 design progressing in 2026–27 will consider a playground, entrance to the area, community hall and a second building as a shared technology and community purpose space.

We will continue to champion local businesses through capability-building initiatives, the Palmerston Business Futures Forum and our ongoing commitment to buying local. Council will also maintain strong partnerships with key government and industry organisations while continuing business newsletters, workshops and advocacy support. Additionally, the refurbishment and activation of the library cafe will create a vibrant community hub that boosts activity in the CBD.

In line with our sustainability commitments, SWELL will undergo a major upgrade with solar panels and battery storage, supported by the Australian Government's Community Energy Upgrades Fund. As Council's highest energy-consuming facility, this project will deliver infrastructure upgrades that will significantly reduce energy consumption and help Council meet the objectives of its Sustainability Strategy and the outcomes of the Community Plan.

Community safety remains a priority for us. Our Regulatory Services team will strengthen safety and wellbeing through responsible pet ownership initiatives, proactive engagement and the review of the Palmerston (Public Places) By-laws 2001. We will continue advocating for the funding needed to support safe urban design and city activation.

We are also undertaking a health check of our Community Plan to ensure our activities continue to align with the outcomes our community values most. Your ideas and feedback will help shape the next chapter for Palmerston, guiding our shared vision for the future. Our annual survey shows residents are experiencing improved opportunities to engage in Council decision-making, with more people connecting with us over the past year. This direct feedback informs our planning and will guide our efforts again when the survey returns in late 2026.

In developing this year's budget, we have recognised that rising costs of living continue to place pressure on households and our operational expenses. While we strive to deliver a balanced budget that meets community expectations in services and affordability, we understand that factors beyond Council's control are impacting everyone. These challenges are taken very seriously, and we will be closely monitoring cost pressures, such as fuel-related impacts, to ensure value for the community while re-prioritising non-essential services as required.

I extend my sincere thanks to our community, stakeholders and staff for their continued support and dedication. Together, we look forward to building on our shared vision of Palmerston as 'A Place for People' throughout 2026–27.

**Athina Pascoe-Bell**  
Mayor

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



As CEO, it is a privilege to support a thriving Palmerston and ensure our organisation continues to meet the needs of our growing community. City of Palmerston's 2026–27 Municipal Plan reinforces our commitment to delivering high-quality services, events and programs, maintaining critical infrastructure and supporting the diverse people who call Palmerston home.

In 2026–27, Council will deliver a \$54 million operational budget and \$9.42 million capital program. Major capital works include the continued delivery of Zuccoli Community Hub Stage through the design of Stage 3, and ongoing improvements to playgrounds, pathways and tree planting. These projects support liveability and wellbeing while strengthening Palmerston's public spaces. Free venue hire for community groups will continue throughout 2026–27, with a shift to not-for-profit fees from January 2027 to support fairer access and better use of shared spaces.

Maintaining and caring for our existing infrastructure also remains central to our work. This includes roads, streetlights, stormwater systems, footpaths, laneways and key community facilities such as the Civic Centre, Recreation Centre, library and public amenities. We continue to improve the usability and amenity of parks and open spaces through upgrades and maintenance, ensuring our outdoor areas remain safe, welcoming and shaded for all.

Palmerston's annual events calendar will again showcase the rich diversity of our community, offering programs

and celebrations for people of all ages and backgrounds. The coming year will also see the implementation of the Library 5-Year Masterplan and continued delivery of the Palmerston Local Economic Plan, supporting local business capability, investment attraction and growth.

Internally, we remain focused on strengthening our workforce. Enhancing recruitment and onboarding processes, supported by actions from our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, Domestic and Family Violence Action Plan and Disability Inclusion Action Plan, will ensure our organisation remains inclusive, culturally safe and capable of delivering high-quality services.

Improving digital inclusion remains a key priority. We are exploring AI-assisted online support to enhance customer experience and expanding self-service functions on our website to streamline processes and reduce administrative workloads. Our commitment to high-quality engagement will continue through activities aligned with our Community Engagement Policy and the new Communications and Engagement Strategy. These efforts will strengthen all Council touchpoints with the community, from content creation and media relations to accessible, easy-to-understand communications in formats that meet community needs.

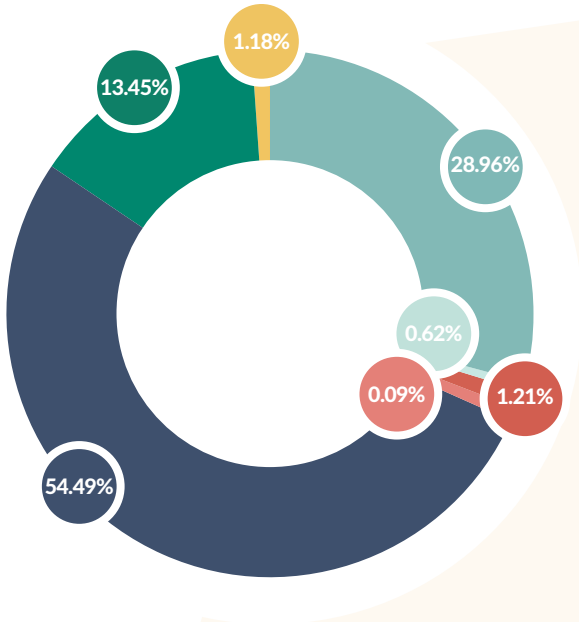
We remain committed to maintaining service levels and delivering the fundamentals well, even as rising industry costs and broader cost-of-living pressures continue to shape the financial environment in which we operate. Our focus this year is on sustaining the programs, services and events our community values. We have developed the budget using the best information available at the time. Management will closely monitor impacts and report emerging financial pressures through established governance and oversight processes, ensuring we remain transparent, responsible and responsive as we continue to grow as 'A Place for People'.

Thank you to our residents, businesses, volunteers and staff for your ongoing support. Together, we look forward to building an even stronger, more connected and more prosperous Palmerston in 2026–27.

**Andrew Walsh**  
Chief Executive Officer

# OUR YEAR AHEAD

## PERCENTAGE OF RATES SPENT



- Employee benefits & costs
- Borrowing costs
- Elected Member Allowances
- Elected Member Expenses
- Materials, contracts & other expenses
- Capital Expenditure
- Loan Repayments



**\$71.50**  
INCREASE TO THE RESIDENTIAL  
MINIMUM RATE



**\$87.45**  
INCREASE TO THE COMMERCIAL  
AND INDUSTRIAL MINIMUM RATE



**FREE ENTRY**  
TO SWELL AND FREE PARKING



**\$9.42 M**  
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS SPEND



**\$2.05 M**

ROADS CAPITAL PROGRAM



**\$102,500**

PLAYSPACE UPGRADES



**\$271,474**

PATHWAYS AND LANEWAYS



**500**

NEW TREES



**\$269,600**

SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS



**ZUCCOLI**

COMMUNITY HUB  
STAGE 3 DESIGN



**\$51,400**

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES



**LIBRARY**

MODERNISATION  
MAKEOVER



**\$15,000**

CBD SIGNAGE REPLACEMENT



**COUNCILLOR**

SAFETY & WELLBEING  
FRAMEWORK



**\$250,000**

COMMUNITY FUNDING  
PROGRAM



**MARLOW LAGOON**

MASTERPLAN

# YOUR RATES

As the overall costs of living and business increase across the country, City of Palmerston and its community have faced the economic reality of rising costs in supplies and services.

While Council aims to mitigate these impacts, the ongoing challenges of economic pressures, supply constraints and general elevated costs of living have contributed to increased costs for contracts, goods and services. Despite this, Council strives to keep the rate increases as minimal as possible, aiming not to place too much financial burden on the community whilst upholding high standards of service delivery.

City of Palmerston applies the Unimproved Capital Value (UCV) method as the basis for determining the assessed rates for each property. A residential rate is applied to the UCV, also known as rate in the dollar (RID). In 2026-27 the RID will increase slightly for all

properties, residential, commercial and industrial. The minimum rate for all properties will also increase by a small amount.

Minimum rates for residential properties in Palmerston will increase by \$71.50, while the RID will slightly increase. This will result in 9,729 properties (68%) of the residential properties remaining on the minimum rate of \$1,530.66.

Commercial and industrial properties will see a \$87.45 increase to the minimum rate and the RID will slightly increase. This will result in 256 properties (53%) remaining on the minimum rate of \$1,569.69.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) covers a ten-year period and is our principal document for ensuring we remain financially sustainable. The LTFP is available at <https://palmerston.nt.gov.au/your-council/city-palmerston-organisation/publications>.

Rating Zone	Rate on UCV	Minimum Rate	Change
R, RR (Excluding RR in the suburb of Marlow Lagoon) LR, LMR, MR, HR, CL, FD, PS, SP8, SP9 (<10,000m <sup>2</sup> ), SP9 (>20,000m <sup>2</sup> ), SP10 and SP11	.00643173	\$1,530.66	\$71.50 increase to the minimum from 2025-26 4.9% increase to the Rate on the UCV
RR in the Suburb of Marlow Lagoon	.00528389	\$1,530.66	\$71.50 increase to the minimum from 2025-26 4.9% increase to the Rate on the UCV
Industrial	.00623594	\$1,569.69	\$87.45 increase to the minimum from 2025-26 7% increase to the Rate on the UCV
All other rateable land	.00925919	\$1,569.69	\$87.45 increase to the minimum from 2025-26 5.9% increase to the Rate on the UCV

## WASTE CHARGES

Waste Charge	Management	2022-23	2023-34	2024-25	2025-26	Budget year 2026-27
Residential Kerbside Collection		\$480	\$527	\$557	\$612	\$631
Manual Service Collection (<25 units)		\$480	\$527	\$557	\$612	\$631
Multiple Dwelling (25 units +)**		\$240	\$264	\$279	\$308	\$320
Upgrade to 240L Annual Service Charge		\$149	\$167	\$174	\$179	\$188
Additional General Waste Kerbside Bin 120L*		\$256	\$274	\$294	\$316	\$332
Additional Recycling Kerbside Bin*		\$113	\$113	\$120	\$120	\$126
Additional General Waste Manual Bin*		\$297	\$318	\$339	\$362	\$380
Additional Recycling Manual Bin*		\$113	\$113	\$120	\$120	\$126

\*These are charged through Fees and Charges, for more information visit [www.palmerston.nt.gov.au](http://www.palmerston.nt.gov.au)

\*\*Council declares this charge where the number of residential dwellings exceeds 25 and the property has its own alternative regular waste collection service.



### EARLY BIRD DRAW

Each year, Council runs a draw which gives two lucky ratepayers, who have paid their rates in full by the first instalment date, \$1,500 each. Early Bird Draw Terms and Conditions will be available in August 2026 at [www.palmerston.nt.gov.au](http://www.palmerston.nt.gov.au).

# OUR COUNCIL

City of Palmerston's 11th Council consists of seven Councillors and the Mayor, with a rotating term of office for the Deputy Mayor which is filled by the Councillors. The 11th Council was elected by residents on 23 August 2025 and sworn in for a four-year term on 9 September 2025.

## ELECTED MEMBERS



### MAYOR ATHINA PASCOE-BELL

Athina and her husband settled in Palmerston in 2004, choosing Marlow Lagoon as their home. They've built their life there, raising their two teenagers. With 20 years in spatial science, split between private and public sectors in NSW and NT, Athina brings extensive governance and planning expertise. Recently, she completed a Bachelor of Laws at CDU to enhance her contribution to the community. Beyond work, she enjoys outdoor activities with Scouts and indulges her creativity in sewing, crochet and occasional woodwork. Athina prioritises sound decision-making and quality outcomes and is eager to collaborate with diverse community groups within the Palmerston community and beyond.



### COUNCILLOR WAYNE BAYLISS

Wayne has served the Northern Territory community for 29 years as a dedicated member of the NT Police Force, predominately in the Territory Intelligence Division and Youth Diversion Unit. Throughout his career he has been recognised for his steady leadership, professionalism and commitment to public safety across the Territory. Wayne has lived in Palmerston since 1996, building both his career and his family within the community. He and his wife Lisa have been married for 27 years and have raised three sons in Palmerston, where the family remains closely connected through schools, sport and long-standing community ties. With nearly three decades of service, Wayne's story reflects loyalty, resilience and a deep commitment to the people and places of the Northern Territory.



### COUNCILLOR MARK FRASER

Mark has called Palmerston home for more than 20 years and was inspired to serve on Council by his passion for community involvement and local decision-making. Having raised his family in Rosebery, he is committed to supporting a city that offers strong community connections, accessible public spaces and opportunities for residents of all ages. Mark is focused on sustainable growth that balances liveability with the needs of a rapidly expanding population. He is particularly interested in how new industries and innovation can strengthen Palmerston's future. Mark is dedicated to ensuring Council remains responsive, responsible and guided by the values that make Palmerston 'A Place for People.'



### **COUNCILLOR DAMIAN HALE**

Damian has called the Northern Territory home since 1974, residing in Maningrida, Katherine and Darwin before settling into the suburb of Gunn with his wife, Maria. With prior experience as the Federal Member for Solomon from 2007 to 2010, Damian is well-equipped to advocate for the Palmerston community on significant future matters. Damian was a Premiership winning player and Coach at St Marys Football Club, and is a Life Member of St Marys Football Club and AFLNT. His background includes work with the Australian Workers Union on the INPEX Project, and his current role is Director with Balcor, a local Indigenous-owned and registered NDIS provider.



### **COUNCILLOR SARAH HENDERSON**

Sarah, a dedicated community advocate and entrepreneur, has been an integral part of the Palmerston community for nearly 40 years. Together with her husband, she has raised five children in Palmerston, and now her grandchildren are growing up in this vibrant community. Actively engaged in various Palmerston community groups over the years, Sarah participates in multiple committees and clubs, particularly supporting the seniors in her community. Throughout this term, Sarah is committed to enhancing services, extending support to fellow community members and advancing Palmerston's sustainability objectives.



### **COUNCILLOR YOLANDA KANYAI**

Yolanda has called Palmerston home since 2021 and is an active contributor within the social and community sector. She works closely with community development teams, enhancing growth and reach of human service projects in metropolitan and remote communities. Yolanda brings a combination of lived experience and academic insight to her work. She holds a Graduate Certificate in Society and Individual from Flinders University and a Bachelor of Design from Charles Darwin University. Beyond her professional life, Yolanda is actively involved in the NT football community, supporting development of grassroots participation; while in her personal time, she enjoys indoor recreational activities and DIY crafts.



### **COUNCILLOR LUCY MORRISON**

Lucy has lived in the Northern Territory since 2008, after moving to the Top End from Queensland. With nearly 20 years' experience in the communications and media industry, she has worked as a journalist and other media roles, as well as in public relations. Lucy's local government and NT Government roles and experience provide her deep governmental insight which she uses to help the community navigate the sometimes heavy bureaucracy. Passionate about healthy living and an active lifestyle, she advocates for involvement in sports and community activities. Lucy focuses on park beautification, city greening, lake management and fostering community participation at events and activities.



### **COUNCILLOR ROB WATERS**

Like many new Northern Territorians, Rob and his wife Nichole came to the NT on what was meant to be a six-month contract. They quickly fell in love with the Territory lifestyle and chose to raise their family outside Darwin's city constraints, settling in Gunn for its vibrant surrounds and strong community spirit. With over 40 years in the hospitality sector, living and working across three continents and five countries, Rob has built extensive experience working with diverse colleagues and communities. This has shaped his leadership approach and strengthened his commitment to helping others succeed. Entering Council, Rob brings a practical, balanced perspective with a strong focus on supporting diverse community groups, strengthening small business and delivering responsible fiscal management for the entire electorate.



*Pictured: 11th Council inauguration, Gray Community Hall, 2025*

## ALLOWANCES

Elected Members are provided with financial support in recognition of the significant level of voluntary work required to represent their community. The Northern Territory Remuneration Tribunal reviewed the Local Government Councils and Local Authority Members allowances in 2025. The allowances were revised and on 12 March 2026 the Chief Minister tabled the new Determination of Allowances for Members of Local Councils in the Legislative Assembly. Further information can be found at: <https://cmc.nt.gov.au/committees/remuneration-tribunal>.

The updated allowances come into effect on 1 July 2026 and are detailed below:

Allowance Type	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Councillor
Annual Allowance	\$26,352.00	\$26,352.00	\$26,352.00
Additional Allowance	\$97,680.00	\$17,200.00	-
Extra Meeting Allowance	-	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
Professional Development Allowance	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
Travel/Vehicle Allowance	-	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Provision of Motor Vehicle	\$25,000.00	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$156,532.00</b>	<b>\$73,052.00</b>	<b>\$55,852.00</b>

Councillors and the Deputy Mayor are entitled to claim an Extra Meeting Allowance up to a yearly maximum of \$12,000. The claimable allowance is:

- \$200 for meetings up to 2 hours
- \$300 for meetings between 2 and 4 hours
- \$500 for meetings over 4 hours (maximum payable for any one day).

Details of other entitlements for Elected Members are outlined in Council's Elected Member Allowances and Expenses Policy available on the website.

# EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Pursuant to section 165 of the Local Government Act, Council employs a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and delegates responsibilities to them to undertake the day-to-day management of Council’s operations, including the management of staff. The CEO is responsible for the overall administration of Council and works closely with Elected Members to ensure Council’s goals and objectives are met.

The CEO is supported in his responsibilities by four General Managers. This group forms Council’s Executive Leadership Team, which leads the staff and operates across the five key areas outlined below.



**ANDREW WALSH**  
Chief Executive Officer

Responsibilities include:

- Advocacy
- Business performance and improvement

- Council and committee services
- Executive support
- Office of the Mayor and Elected Members
- Strategic initiatives and partnerships
- Strategic organisational planning
- Strategy and insights



**NADINE NILON**  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer / General Manager Infrastructure

Responsibilities include:

- Building maintenance
- City and statutory planning
- Environmental sustainability
- Infrastructure design and delivery
- Infrastructure maintenance and operations
- Lake management
- Natural environment management
- Outdoor workforce
- Parks and open spaces
- Project management
- Public lighting
- Resilience and disaster management
- Stormwater and transport
- Waste and resource recovery



**KONRAD SEIDL**  
General Manager Community

Responsibilities include:

- Community development
- Community facility management
- Community grants and sponsorship
- Community health and wellbeing
- Community inclusion
- Community networks
- Community safety
- Library services
- Multicultural interests
- Partnerships
- Reconciliation
- Recreation and leisure
- Regulatory services



**EMMA BLIGHT**  
General Manager People and Place

Responsibilities include:

- Arts and culture
- Community engagement
- Community events
- Customer experience
- Economic development
- Marketing and communications
- Organisational culture and development
- Partnerships
- People
- Placemaking
- Safety and wellbeing
- Strategic projects



**WATI KERTA**  
General Manager Finance and Governance

Responsibilities include:

- Asset management
- Corporate reporting
- External and internal audit programs
- Financial management
- Fleet management
- Governance
- Information and records management
- Information technology
- Procurement
- Property and commercial
- Risk management

# OUR PEOPLE

“City of Palmerston is a great place to work, and we want to demonstrate the value people receive through their employment.”

*Pictured: City of Palmerston staff end of year breakfast, Palmerston Golf Club, 2025.*



## City of Palmerston is committed to creating a constructive, supportive team environment with core practices of professional development and collaboration.

We are dedicated to having a positive impact on our community through investing in our people, who deliver for Palmerston through the pillars of our Customer Service Charter:

- Make it easy
- Perform with pride
- Listen, learn and act
- Evaluate and improve.

The CEO is ultimately responsible for the employment of all employees, in accordance with Council's approved Staffing Plan. The Staffing Plan for 2026-27 allows for approximately 100 employees who operate under the CEO's direction and are divided into five directorates:

- Office of the Chief Executive Officer
- People and Place
- Community
- Infrastructure
- Finance and Governance.

These positions are the equivalent of 103.35 full-time positions (known as full-time equivalents, or FTEs). The total budget for employee costs for 2026-27 is \$13.34 million, which includes wages, superannuation and employee insurance.

City of Palmerston is a great place to work and we want to demonstrate the value people receive through their employment. We provide staff with fair and transparent

employment conditions through our Enterprise Agreement. This includes improved recreation leave, options for salary sacrifice and access to employee assistance and wellbeing programs. We're also working on creating a positive and healthy workplace through new ways of working, with a focus on strengthening employee engagement and alignment through avenues beyond traditional terms and conditions. This includes encouraging further collaboration and connection with our people through workplace workshops led by staff and the newly established Employee Consultative Committee.

We will continue strengthening how we attract and retain staff by improving our recruitment and onboarding processes. This includes incorporating actions from our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, Domestic and Family Violence Action Plan and Disability Inclusion Action Plan to ensure our practices are inclusive and culturally safe. Having skilled and capable employees ultimately benefits our community by ensuring we can deliver high-quality services.

In 2026-27 we will also redesign key people and workforce processes to make them more efficient and easier for staff to use. This work focuses on removing unnecessary steps and duplication in our operations so that employees can focus their time on meaningful work that supports organisational goals and the Palmerston community.

“Investing in our people ensures we can deliver meaningful outcomes for the Palmerston community.”

# OUR PERFORMANCE

Council relies on a yearly Community Satisfaction Survey to gain an understanding of the community’s satisfaction in relation to the facilities, events and services we provide.

The survey allows us to monitor our performance and identify successful outcomes, community priorities and areas for improvement. It reports on the six key outcome areas of the Community Plan:

- Family and Community
- Vibrant Economy
- Cultural Diversity
- A Future Focus
- Environmental Sustainability
- Governance.

There are a range of indicators under each outcome to measure Council’s progress. Many of these indicators are measured and tracked through Council’s standard operating processes; however, others rely on the thoughts, perceptions and satisfaction levels of the community, which are measured through the annual survey.

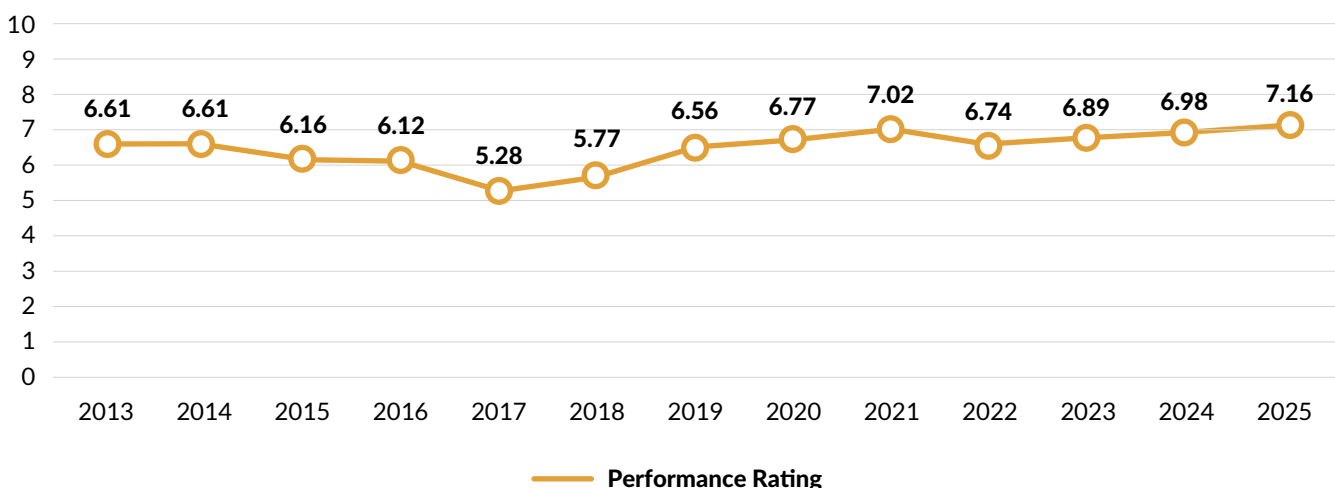
In 2025, we received feedback from 600 residents via telephone and 15 online. The overall average score for the survey increased from 6.95/10 in 2024 to 7.26/10 in 2025, which is an all-time high, indicating a positive result for Council. Overall, residents are experiencing an improvement in their ability to engage with Council decision-making, supported by a growing number of

people reaching out to Council over the past year. From the perspective of the community, the most significant Council achievements were the festivals, events and markets put on, improved footpaths and roads, and upgraded swimming facilities.

Last year, Council’s Net Promoter Score improved by 2 points from -8 to -6, which is a small but positive shift. The Net Promoter Score is a standardised measure which represents how likely our residents are to recommend living in Palmerston. It can range from -100 (100% detractors) to +100 (100% promoters), with 0 being passive where residents don’t promote or detract the area. Among promoters, the most common reasons for recommending City of Palmerston as a place to live included being a nice area in general, a community area with activities for families, proximity to amenities and services, and being relaxed and quiet without crowds.

Crime, safety and antisocial behaviour emerged as the most pressing concerns for the Palmerston community in 2025. In response, Council continues to advocate for residents while delivering programs that positively influence these issues, including youth initiatives, community events, enhanced laneway management and strong collaboration with government and key organisations. At the same time, Council is also navigating growing expectations to support and attract local businesses, advocate for community interests in planning and development, and deliver effective animal management services. These priorities are being addressed through the outcomes and objectives outlined in our Community Plan, which guide our long-term approach to strengthening the wellbeing, safety and prosperity of Palmerston.

## OVERALL SCORE TREND



The 2025 average scores for outcomes have continued trending upward. As a result, this year marked a new milestone, achieving the highest average score across the measures of 7.16/10. There were no decreases in any outcome.

Key Area	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Change
Family and Community	6.80	7.16	6.89	6.96	7.27	7.43	+0.16
Vibrant Economy	6.28	6.55	6.24	6.44	6.44	6.69	+0.25
Cultural Diversity	7.21	7.50	7.31	7.39	7.53	7.63	+0.10
A Future Focus	6.84	7.02	6.70	6.84	6.82	6.95	+0.13
Environmental Sustainability	7.33	7.36	7.08	7.29	7.30	7.52	+0.22
Governance	6.17	6.52	6.19	6.43	6.50	6.72	+0.22
Net promoter score	-4	-6	-13	-18	-8	-6	+2
<b>Average Performance</b>	<b>6.77/10</b>	<b>7.02/10</b>	<b>6.74/10</b>	<b>6.89/10</b>	<b>6.98/10</b>	<b>7.16/10</b>	<b>+0.25</b>

The highest performing services continue to be providing libraries and library services to the community (8.27), kerbside waste collection (8.23), providing and maintaining Archer Waste Management Facility (8.12) and hosting enough quality community events, such as the Palmerston Youth Festival, Christmas Wonderland and FlicNics (8.11).

The lowest scoring measure was supporting and attracting new and existing businesses (6.09). However, this still increased by +0.22 from the previous year, demonstrating a positive shift. Palmerston’s Local Economic Plan sets a strong long-term vision for a thriving and resilient Palmerston economy, recognising the key role that business and economic support systems play in our city’s success. In 2026-27, we will strengthen our efforts to attract and retain businesses and industries. We will also continue our Community Funding Program, sponsorship for large-scale events and celebrations that highlight the Palmerston area, community safety initiatives and delivery of capital investment programs with ongoing commitment to buy local and supporting the local economy. Together, these actions will help create the vibrant and prosperous local economy envisioned in our Community Plan.

## WHAT’S NEXT?

We remain dedicated to ongoing community engagement and gathering meaningful feedback from residents on our services, events and projects. Listening to our community helps us understand what matters most to the people who live, work and spend time in Palmerston. By identifying opportunities for improvement, we can ensure our decisions and future actions continue to shape Palmerston as ‘A Place for People’, where community needs guide our priorities and everyone feels welcome, safe and supported.

The next survey, scheduled for July 2026, will provide another valuable opportunity for residents to share their experiences and help us plan for an even better Palmerston.

# COMMUNITY PLAN HEALTH CHECK

## COMMUNITY STARTS WITH A CONVERSATION

In 2018, Council worked with a group of community members to consider the future they wanted for City of Palmerston, agreeing on six core outcomes. These outcomes formed the basis of the Community Plan, which has been the governing document for all of Council's work since.

We're doing a health check on our Community Plan now to make sure our activities are aligned with those outcomes. The health check will be able to tell us if we need to refresh the content to better meet the needs and values of our community. Our community's ideas and feedback will help to shape our next chapter.

Community engagement is open now until 9 May 2026.

Feedback received from the community will be collated and presented to a Community Panel made up of diverse community members for discussion. On Sunday 17 May 2026 the Community Panel will take part in a workshop facilitated by independent consultants, DemocracyCo, to review the feedback and provide recommendations to Council.

Registrations to take part in the Community Panel close on Sunday 26 April 2026

Visit our website at <https://palmerston.nt.gov.au/your-opportunities/community-engagement-for-more-information>.



Scan  
QR CODE

## WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR



### What's going well?

- Council is actively promoting community
- Great family activities that are inclusive and accessible
- Taking care of Mitchell Creek
- Great spaces for gatherings
- Lots of community events
- Awareness about cultural diversity
- Opportunities for all ages
- Maintaining lakes and parks well



### What can help achieve our outcomes?

- More diverse options for young people and their families
- Attract major events to Palmerston
- Keep Palmerston safe with more lighting
- Create opportunities to have more business
- Accessibility to information
- Multipurpose facilities
- More wet season activities
- Increase people's connection and participation



### Why are the current objectives important?

- To encourage growth in the direction where community spirit is valued and essential
- To bring and keep people in Palmerston
- A beautiful environment makes for happy people
- To make community spaces comfortable for everyone
- Growing and supporting local businesses
- Promotes a feeling of community
- Builds safer communities
- Puts Palmerston front and centre as a family friendly community

# 01 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

## OUTCOME

Palmerston is a safe and family-friendly community where everyone belongs.

## OBJECTIVES

- We focus on families
- The wellbeing of our community is a focus for all our work

“City of Palmerston remains dedicated to enabling everyone to feel welcome and at home in our city by fostering a sense of safety and inclusivity.”



Palmerston is city where people enjoy a high-quality, happy lifestyle. Our community is dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of families and celebrating connection, creating the perfect environment for families to flourish. When people feel safe, supported and inspired, they enjoy every moment Palmerston offers.

Progressing the Zuccoli Community Hub is a key part of supporting the wellbeing of our rapidly growing community, creating a vibrant, multi-purpose precinct that meets the recreation and open space needs of Zuccoli residents and the wider City of Palmerston. Designed to benefit people across Palmerston, the hub is taking shape with the new pump track now open. This facility has been shaped with community input and expert design to create a safe, exciting space for beginner and intermediate BMX riders, mountain bikers and scooter users, complete with lighting, shade and welcoming BBQ areas. Large open green spaces have been reserved for future features including a skate park, sports courts and an outdoor gym, ensuring the precinct continues to evolve as funding becomes available.

We will begin implementing the Palmerston Library 5-Year Master Plan, launching the first stage of an exciting roadmap for the future of our library services. Over the next five years, this plan will enhance accessibility, expand services, embrace new technologies and strengthen community engagement. Through this strategic approach, the library will continue to grow as a vibrant, inclusive hub that supports learning, culture and connection for everyone in our community.

City of Palmerston Library is also getting a major makeover. We're replacing the old, fixed shelving with modern, mobile units that can shift, adapt and open up the space for bigger, better programs, events and community activities. This fresh new layout will build on the flexible children's area introduced in 2024, making it easier than ever to explore, enjoy and care for the collection. Rolling out across 2025-26 and 2026-27, this upgrade will deliver a family friendly, inclusive and future focused library designed to grow with our community. With more usable floor space, improved displays and vibrant modern signage, the library will become an even more welcoming hub of learning, culture and connection.

*Pictured left: Zuccoli Pump Track, 2026*

*Pictured right: Mum and bub Culturefest Goyder Square May 2025*





“The return of the Palmerston Youth Festival will offer young people inspiring opportunities to build skills, confidence and friendships.

*Pictured: Mum and daughter with program Geekfest Day 2 July 2025*

Community events remain a much-loved and essential part of what we offer in Palmerston, bringing people together through fun, connection and shared experiences. Our Easter celebrations will continue to brighten local shopping precincts with lively activations, cheerful roving bunny visits and movie screenings at Event Cinemas. Signature favourites like Live at the Lake, Flicnics and Seniors Day will again form part of our diverse lineup of free, family-friendly outdoor events that encourage relaxed, inclusive community connection. Brekkie in the Park celebrates its 10th anniversary! July 2026 will see the return of the Palmerston Youth Festival, supported by the Northern Territory Government, offering young people inspiring opportunities to build skills, confidence and friendships. Halloween festivities will return bigger and spookier than ever and the year will close with the spectacular Christmas Wonderland in Goyder Square, which draws nearly 20,000 people.

Regulatory Services will strengthen community safety and wellbeing through a renewed focus on responsible pet ownership, updated regulations and proactive community engagement. Key initiatives include

re-introducing a desexing program to reduce unwanted animal populations, progressing a temporary cattery and completing a much-needed review of the Public Places By-laws. The team will also deliver a refreshed Animal Management Plan that will be implemented in 2026-27, and continue to build connections through the community ranger engagement program, offering pop-up stalls and discussion opportunities at Council events.

The Community Safety and Wellness Advisory Committee, established in December 2025 by combining previous committees with shared priorities, strengthens Council’s approach to safety and wellbeing while respecting the valuable time of our community members, partners and staff. This unified committee provides strategic advice on a wide range of social, community, animal management and wellbeing matters that influence Palmerston’s by-laws, Council services, program development and the priorities of the Inclusive, Diverse and Accessible Policy framework. By helping Council identify and respond to emerging issues, the committee plays a key role in shaping a safer, more connected and inclusive city.

# MEASURES OF SUCCESS

These measures are indicators of our success in achieving the Family and Community objectives:



Increased participation in community events, activities and programs



Increased compliance in areas such as number of registered dogs and valid licences to keep more than two dogs



Increased use of free venue hire



Community feedback on regulatory education and awareness initiatives



Improved perception of crime



Community satisfaction with the services that are provided by Council and an increase in usage of these services.



Decreased number of infringements issued to members of the public

*Pictured: Dad and daughter in frame Brekkie in the Park Gray Community Hall May 2025*

Free fun near you!



# 02 VIBRANT ECONOMY

## OUTCOME

Palmerston is a destination city for employment. It is a place where businesses are encouraged to set up and to grow.

## OBJECTIVES

- Improve Palmerston's image
- Palmerston's economic future is bright

“Our commitment to buying local through our Procurement Policy will remain a key driver of support for small and medium enterprises in Palmerston.”



Palmerston is a young, energetic and rapidly growing city. Our thriving economy and business community bring many positives to the people who live here. When local businesses flourish, families flourish too, creating a more liveable city for everyone. Strong job opportunities help people build their futures, put down roots and choose to stay, strengthening the sense of community that makes Palmerston such a great place to call home.

In 2026–27, we will continue to champion local businesses by promoting events, opportunities and initiatives. We'll also strengthen brand visibility across our spaces, continue to facilitate valuable business networking opportunities and actively promote Palmerston as an ideal location for new businesses and industries, in line with the Palmerston Local Economic Plan. Our commitment to buying local through our Procurement Policy will remain a key driver of support for small and medium enterprises in Palmerston.

The Palmerston Business Futures Forum will return in 2026, offering an exciting opportunity to showcase Council's progress and share new business support initiatives. Council continues to deliver the Palmerston Business Newsletter, alongside exploring a series of free networking and collaboration events designed to attract new businesses, help existing businesses grow and innovate, and connect local industry with valuable private-sector support.

A new quarterly Innovation Session will give business owners the chance to learn practical strategies for developing and strengthening their ideas with guidance from experts. Complementing this, Business Blitz sessions will deliver quick, one-hour opportunities for owners to drop in and receive free, expert advice on key business topics. These initiatives help connect local businesses with private-sector expertise and commercial opportunities, attract new enterprises to Palmerston and empower existing businesses to grow, innovate and succeed.

*Pictured left: Buffalo Country, Darwin Festival 2025.*

*Pictured right: SWELL water play, 2025*





“*Strong partnerships and vibrant places are key to driving Palmerston’s economic future.*”

*Pictured: Culturefest  
Goyder Square May 2025*

Strong partnerships will remain central to our economic development efforts, with ongoing engagement with key organisations including the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations, the Darwin Innovation Hub, the Business Enterprise Centre NT, the NT Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Palmerston Regional Business Association and the Industry Skills Advisory Council.

The refurbishment of the library cafe will breathe new life into the area surrounding the library, creating a lively and welcoming space for the whole community. The precinct will gain a vibrant meeting place that enhances the overall experience for library users, residents, local businesses and visitors alike. This transformation directly supports Council’s commitment to fostering a

vibrant local economy by creating an inviting destination that boosts activity and connection in the heart of Palmerston.

The Vibrant Economy Advisory Committee plays an important role in strengthening Palmerston’s economic future by providing Council with informed, strategic advice aligned with the Palmerston Local Economic Plan and its action plan. Through its work, the committee helps identify new opportunities for economic growth, supports improvements to community services and ensures Council initiatives reflect legislative requirements and contemporary business needs. The committee brings together valuable industry perspectives and balanced insights to guide the implementation of key economic priorities.

# MEASURES OF SUCCESS

These measures are indicators of our success in achieving the Vibrant Economy objectives:



People of Palmerston choose to shop locally



More funds available for Council to invest in the community



Employment rates increase



Increase in businesses located in Palmerston.



Population of Palmerston is growing (families stay)



Increase in community satisfaction on brand recognition through the community survey



Increase in tourists visiting Palmerston

Pictured: Events sign Live at the Lake June 2025



# 03 CULTURAL DIVERSITY

## OUTCOME

In Palmerston, we celebrate our cultures in a way that values our diversity.

## OBJECTIVES

- To celebrate our rich culture and diversity
- Recognise and support diversity through our partnerships and leadership

“Palmerston is strongest when we celebrate our diversity and live in harmony.”



Palmerston's rich mosaic of cultures is something we proudly celebrate, knowing our community is strongest when we live in harmony and draw on the diverse experiences, traditions and perspectives that enrich our everyday lives.

Everyone has a role in shaping Palmerston's future, and every individual matters. We are committed to fostering an equitable environment guided by our Community Plan, the Inclusive, Diverse and Accessible Policy Framework and our Disability Inclusion and Access Plan. These foundations ensure all our programs and services are thoughtfully designed to meet the needs of people of all ages, cultures, abilities and backgrounds, creating a welcoming city where everyone can participate and thrive.

The 2026–2028 Disability, Inclusion and Access Plan was developed in partnership with a dedicated working group of people with lived experience and sector experts, ensuring it truly reflects the needs and aspirations of our community. In 2026-27, the plan will continue driving programs, initiatives and infrastructure upgrades that strengthen inclusion across Palmerston. This includes initiatives like the Sunflower Program, which raises awareness of invisible disabilities and helps ensure people who may need extra support, understanding or time when accessing services feel recognised and respected. We will also continue to review communications to ensure inclusive language and accessible messaging is used across Council materials.

The Low Sensory Christmas Wonderland event provides a quieter and more inclusive Christmas experience for children and families who may feel overwhelmed by busy or high-stimulus environments. The event features reduced noise, softer lighting and a calmer atmosphere so that children with sensory sensitivities, including those with autism or other additional needs, can enjoy the magic of Christmas in a safe and welcoming space. This initiative supports inclusion and ensures more families can participate in community celebrations.

Improving digital inclusion remains a priority for us. The library will continue to provide digital literacy assistance, supporting community members to get online and build confidence with technology. The library's digital collections will also continue to grow, with ongoing expansion of the Libby eBook and eAudiobook collection, including Language Other Than English resources, and the addition of PressReader, providing access to thousands of newspapers and magazines from around the world.

Our library is refreshing and rebranding its Home Service to become the Library Outreach Service, reflecting that you don't need to be housebound to access it. Whether you're at home, in hospital, caring for a newborn or living in a residential facility, this service brings books, resources and library programs directly to you. With the support of staff and volunteers, the Outreach Service is a free, fortnightly delivery that makes the library accessible to all, wherever life takes you. This exciting refresh ensures our library continues to connect, support and engage the whole community, no matter their circumstances.

*Pictured left: Christmas Wonderland Low Sensory Night December 2025*

*Pictured right: Crafts - International Women's Day 2026*



# Celebrating Australian Citizenship



“Creating welcoming spaces that foster connection, creativity and wellbeing is at the heart of our community.”

*Pictured: Citizenship Ceremony Sept 2025*

Launched in 2025, the All in Activities program at the library has been a huge success, providing a relaxed, welcoming space for adults of all ages to engage in arts and crafts, socialise and boost wellbeing. This free weekly program offers self-directed creative activities, with guidance and occasional sessions led by external providers, ensuring everyone can participate at their own pace. By reducing social isolation, fostering creative confidence and encouraging community connections, All in Activities reinforces the library’s role as a vibrant, inclusive learning and social space.

Council has proudly adopted its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan and will now begin implementing it, demonstrating our commitment to taking real, tangible actions toward reconciliation. The plan will guide practical steps to strengthen partnerships, create meaningful opportunities and include reconciliation into everything we do. By actively listening, learning and working together, we can build a more inclusive and connected community for everyone. As implementation progresses, the actions of the Reflect plan will be embedded across Council’s work where appropriate, supporting deeper cultural understanding and respectful collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Palmerston’s event calendar continues to celebrate the rich diversity of our community through a vibrant mix of programs for people of all ages and backgrounds. NT Youth Week brings young people together and strengthens their connections with local services, while Children’s Week shines a spotlight on the rights, talents and contributions of children in line with national recognition and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each March, International Women’s Day honours the achievements of women and promotes gender equality, and in November, International Men’s Day recognises the positive contributions of men and boys while raising awareness of their health and wellbeing.

We will continue to support a vibrant cultural and music scene in Palmerston too, with major events set to return and grow in the coming years. At the same time, we continue to champion participation in beloved events like the Darwin Festival, ensuring Palmerston remains a lively, creative and culturally rich destination for residents and visitors alike.

# MEASURES OF SUCCESS

These measures are indicators of our success in achieving the Cultural Diversity objectives:



Increased community participation in arts and cultural activities



Inclusion and accessibility are incorporated into our programming and planning



Community Funding Program is promoted through a variety of channels to community groups



Council consults with and includes the needs of all people in our programs and planning using a mechanism we've agreed with those communities



Increase in Community Funding Program applications from diverse organisations



Improvement in fostering and promoting arts and culture in our community and awareness and promotion of our local history



Existing partnerships are inclusive of emerging communities

*Pictured: International Women's Day 2026*



# 04 A FUTURE FOCUS

## OUTCOME

Palmerston is an innovative city that can sustain itself through the challenges of the future.

## OBJECTIVES

- We support and foster innovation
- Infrastructure is fit for purpose

“Our ongoing investment in infrastructure supports a safe, welcoming and connected Palmerston for all.”



## Maintaining and caring for Palmerston's infrastructure is important to ensure it remains safe, reliable and fit for purpose.

This includes upkeep of our roads, streetlights, stormwater systems, footpaths and laneways, as well as the management of key community facilities such as the Civic Centre, Recreation Centre, library and public amenities. We also deliver a wide range of essential servicing and repair activities from cleaning to graffiti management. These ongoing efforts help keep Palmerston's assets in good condition and support a well-functioning, welcoming city for residents, businesses and visitors.

In 2026-27 we are continuing to strengthen community safety through our CCTV upgrade program, with major improvements underway at the City of Palmerston Library and the Archer Waste Management Facility. At the library, a new platform will enable automated, proactive monitoring and real-time alerting, supported by higher-resolution cameras and expanded coverage to enhance safety for both the public and staff. The Archer Waste Management Facility will receive a similar upgrade to increase visibility and help create safer, more secure facilities across Palmerston, ensuring our community spaces are well protected and responsibly managed.

Council is actively contributing to the development of Palmerston by working closely with developers in ensuring new assets such as stormwater infrastructure, roads, footpaths, playgrounds and community infrastructure is delivered in accordance with required standards to support our newest neighbourhoods. This approach ensures Palmerston's expanding suburbs are fit for purpose, connected and ready to thrive as welcoming places for families. Alongside this work,

the new City Centre Parking Policy will establish a clear framework for future strategies and initiatives to improve, activate and optimise parking in the CBD, helping to create a more accessible and vibrant city centre.

We continue to enhance the quality and usability of parks and public spaces across Palmerston, delivering new facilities and upgrades that make our outdoor areas more enjoyable for all ages. Across Palmerston, standard improvements to roads, lighting and footpaths will be ongoing, including a major road surface upgrade on Temple Terrace, footpath enhancements and lighting upgrades in parts of the CBD. Planning is also underway for the redevelopment of Widdup Park, with concept plans and community consultation exploring opportunities for play and sporting spaces tailored to older children and teenagers, as well as improved access. Additional upgrades include replacing the equipment at Kintore Park and installing a new shade structure at Sister Frederick Mangan Park to improve all-weather access and protect play equipment for the long term.

Council provides a variety of welcoming and versatile venues for hire, including the Recreation Centre, Library Community Room, Durack Community Arts Centre, Gray Community Hall and the Driver Resource Centre. These spaces support a diverse range of activities from fitness classes and cultural workshops to programs and gatherings for seniors, young people and children, helping to foster community participation and make Palmerston an even more family-friendly city. Free venue hire for community groups will continue in 2026-27, with fees for not-for-profit organisations introduced from January 2027. Applying fees to bookings encourages groups to reserve only the time they genuinely need, supporting fairer access, reducing underused time slots and improving overall availability for the broader community.

*Pictured left: Marlow Lagoon  
Basketball Court Mural June 2025*

*Pictured right: Brekkie in the Park  
Gray Community Hall Harvest  
Corner May 2025*





“Hands-on creative programs are empowering young people to build skills, confidence and explore future pathways.”

*Pictured: Clean up Australia Day March 2025*

The library will once again offer the popular Recording Studio Experience workshops during the school holidays, held in the Gulwa Community Recording Studio for young people aged 12-25. This program gives participants hands-on experience with professional recording equipment and introduces them to key skills such as songwriting, music recording and basic audio production. The workshops are designed to build confidence, spark creativity and strengthen digital capabilities, while also exposing young people to exciting future pathways in the music and media industries.

Information technology and communications (ICT) continue to drive innovation across Council, ensuring our systems remain modern, efficient and fit for purpose. By the start of 2026-27, Council expects to have engaged a new Enterprise Resource Planning provider to streamline core business processes and begun implementation, strengthening our digital foundations for years to come. Public WiFi will continue

to be provided across the Palmerston CBD and regional parks, supporting connectivity for residents and visitors. In addition, ICT offsite backups are being enhanced to future-proof Council’s records and systems, ensuring security, reliability and resilience as our digital services grow.

We will continue strengthening our connection with the community by building our email database through our media and engagement campaigns and communications, responding directly to Community Satisfaction Survey feedback that residents prefer receiving information by email. Alongside this, we will keep researching and testing new tools and engagement methods to help us reach people more effectively. By using communication data and engagement insights to refine our social media channels, we aim to ensure information is shared clearly, accessibly and in ways that genuinely meet the needs of our community.

# MEASURES OF SUCCESS

These measures are indicators of our success to achieve the Future Focus objectives:



Council consults with and includes the needs of all people in its programs and planning using a mechanism it has agreed with those communities



Increase in site visits to Emergency Dashboard



Improved condition data and financial valuations of assets



Council provides a platform that supports and allows for innovation by both staff members and the community



Optimisation of asset renewal

*Pictured: Zuccoli Pump Track  
March 2026*



# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

## OUTCOME

Palmerston is an environmentally friendly, liveable city that promotes renewable practices and sustainability.

## OBJECTIVES

- Reduce our footprint on the environment
- Palmerston is a cool, shaded, green city
- Encourage personal action and taking a leadership role

“Council is leading by example in reducing our environmental footprint and promoting sustainable practices.”



Green spaces bring our community together, encouraging people to enjoy the outdoors, boost their wellbeing and embrace our unique climate.

We are committed to supporting a more sustainable Palmerston by encouraging environmentally responsible behaviours and creating practical opportunities for the community to recycle, reduce waste and explore renewable options.

We continue to provide kerbside recycling services and invest in public waste education through free workshops and community programs, and clear guidance on best-practice waste management informed by recycling audit results. Across all campaigns and initiatives, Council is also reviewing promotional materials to identify opportunities to reduce waste and continue modelling sustainable practices for our community including investigating more sustainable merchandise options and reducing unnecessary printing.

The annual Pre-Cyclone Clean-Up will return ahead of the 2026-27 wet season, giving residents an important opportunity to safely dispose of hard waste that could become a hazard from around their homes. The new resource recovery area and cardboard compactor at Archer Waste Management Facility are now open and operating, with ongoing improvements such as new wayfinding signage to enhance the user experience.

As part of Council's commitment to reducing our environmental footprint and leading by example in sustainable energy use, the SWELL facility will undergo a major upgrade through the installation of solar panels and battery storage jointly funded through the Australian Government's Community Energy Upgrades Fund. This project will significantly cut peak power demand and reduce ongoing electricity costs, while delivering substantial environmental benefits. Once operational, the system is expected to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by more than 90 tonnes each year, making it one of Council's most impactful emissions-reduction initiatives to date.

*Pictured left: Lake harvester*

*Pictured below: Pre-cyclone cleanup  
September 2025*





“A proactive approach helps keep Palmerston clean, accessible and well cared for.”

*Pictured: Weed spraying  
November 2024*

Council is strengthening its sustainable water management practices through the finalisation of the Irrigation Management Plan, updated irrigation technical specifications and the installation of water sensors to automate lake fills and provide clearer data on groundwater use. These improvements will support more efficient and responsible irrigation across Palmerston’s open spaces and help achieve long-term sustainability goals. This work is further supported by the development of the Palmerston Dolostone Aquifer Assessment and Groundwater Use Action Plan, which will guide future groundwater allocations for Council’s irrigation systems. The Palmerston lakes will continue to be carefully monitored and maintained under the Lake Management Plan, with ongoing water-quality testing and both mechanical and chemical weed management to ensure the health and resilience of this important urban green infrastructure.

To further demonstrate our commitment to keeping Palmerston a cool, shaded and green city, Council will continue to maintain our open spaces so they remain safe, welcoming and enjoyable for everyone. This includes regular mowing, landscaping, irrigation, caring for park furniture and BBQs, repairing playgrounds and removing litter. We also encourage residents to take personal actions, whether that’s looking after their verge or helping keep shared spaces tidy, as we work together to protect and enhance Palmerston’s natural environment.

Separately, Council will continue delivering the Long Grass Program through Regulatory Services, ensuring the safety, visual amenity and accessibility of our neighbourhoods. This proactive approach helps maintain community standards while supporting our broader efforts to create a clean, attractive and well-cared-for city.

# MEASURES OF SUCCESS

These measures are indicators of our success to achieve the Environmental Sustainability objectives:



Increased level of recycling/  
proportion of rubbish recycled



Improved vehicle emissions  
reporting through Council's fuel  
usage reporting system



Decrease in littering



Number of vehicles using the  
new EV charging station



Increase in canopy  
coverage (percentage of  
areas shaded by trees)



Increase the use of Electric  
Vehicles within the  
Palmerston municipality



Improved biodiversity  
outcomes



Decrease in costs  
associated with printing



Improved community  
satisfaction in relation to  
the Palmerston lakes



Increase in online  
services

*Pictured: Couples Live at the  
Lake June 2025*



# 06 GOVERNANCE

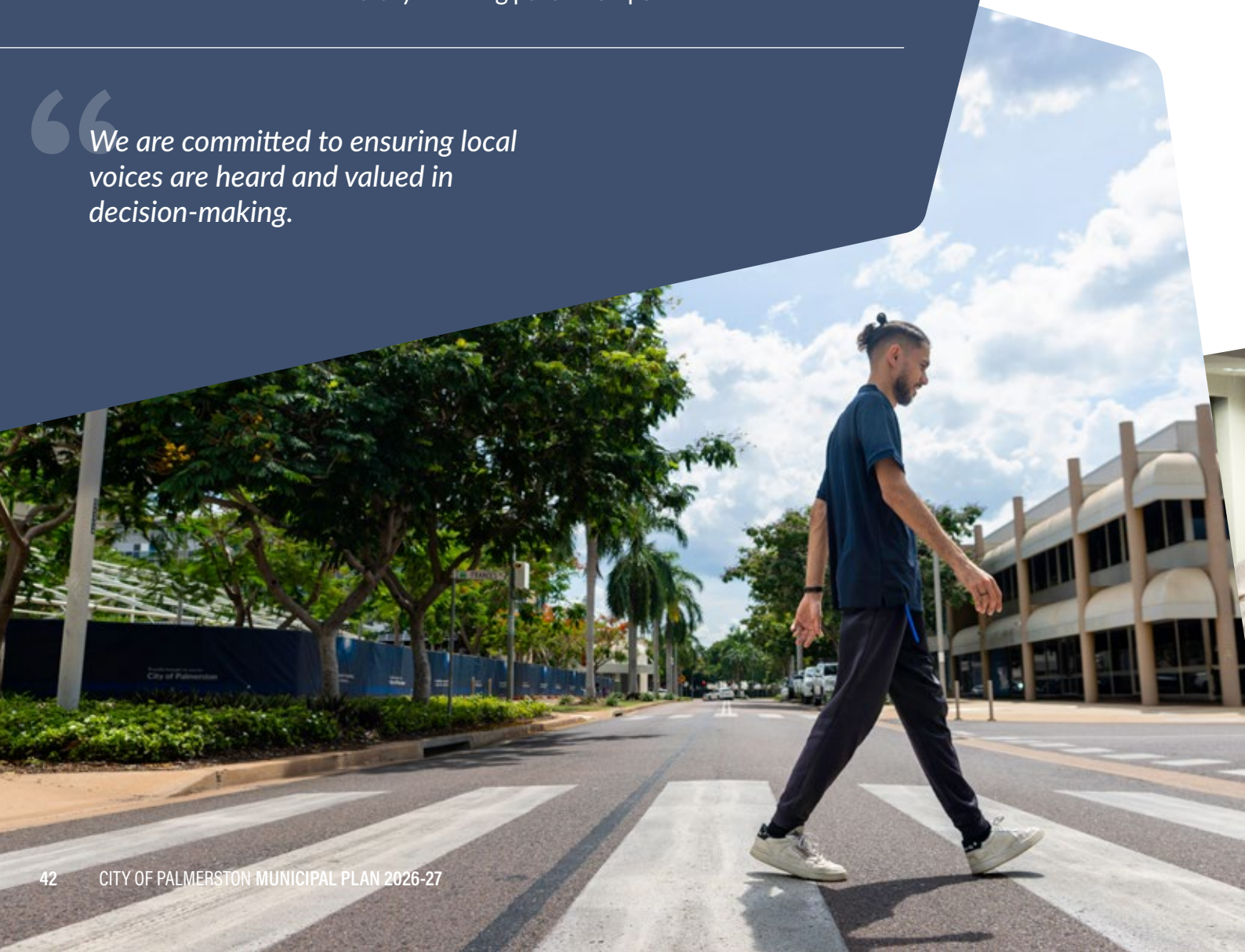
## OUTCOME

Our strategies to support achieving this objective are based on using effective, accountable and adaptable processes to deliver on our Community Plan.

## OBJECTIVES

- Ensure we have a leading governance model
- Community is at the centre
- Healthy working partnerships

“We are committed to ensuring local voices are heard and valued in decision-making.”



Council strives to remain closely connected to the community, working in partnership to deliver what people need to support their daily lives.

Strong, modern governance underpins this commitment, ensuring we can effectively deliver on the goals of our Community Plan. This means being effective by doing what we say we will do, being accountable through openness, transparency and regular reporting, and being courageous by embracing new solutions, taking measured risks, adopting emerging technologies and staying flexible and adaptable.

Maintaining and building the trust of our community is incredibly important to Council. We are committed to ensuring our decision-making is open, accessible and transparent. Council meetings are open to the public and community attendance is strongly encouraged. Each Ordinary Council Meeting is preceded by an open public forum at 5:00pm in the Council Chambers at Civic Plaza, which is a relaxed and informal opportunity for residents to speak directly with the Mayor and Elected Members, ask questions and share ideas before formal proceedings begin. To ensure even greater accessibility,

Council also holds community council meetings in the suburbs twice a year, bringing decision-makers closer to residents and making it easier for people to participate. Through these forums, Council continues to strengthen its partnership with the community and ensure local voices are heard.

Council is committed to bringing the community into all aspects of its work, encouraging residents to be active participants in Council's business and local decision-making. A key focus for the year ahead is delivering high-quality engagement activities aligned with the Community Engagement Policy and new priorities identified through the Communications and Engagement Strategy. This strategy sets a future-focused direction for how Council communicates and connects with its community, replacing existing communications and social media strategies with one clear, overarching framework. It will strengthen all Council touchpoints, including content creation, engagement practices, newsletters, marketing campaigns, media relations and digital channels, while ensuring communications are accessible, easy to understand and available in formats that meet community needs. Continued improvements to our website will further enhance customer experience, accessibility and usability.

*Pictured left: Palmerston CBD, November 2024*

*Pictured right: Business Workshop October 2025 (Credit Bijay)*





“Using customer insights helps us better understand and respond to community needs.”

*Pictured: Business Workshop October 2025*

We are continuing to enhance the community’s customer experience by investing more time and resources into understanding customer data, allowing us to better support residents and respond to their needs. We are reducing customer wait times through improved internal workflows, including the introduction of interactive voice response and helpful pre-recorded messages on our phone system that provide key information upfront. We are also expanding self-service options on the Council website and exploring new technologies that make it easier and faster for customers to access the services they need.

The Community Funding Program is Council’s grant initiative designed to support individuals, groups and organisations to deliver positive, community-focused projects that contribute to Palmerston being a true place for people. To help applicants build confidence and capability, Council will continue offering grant workshops in 2026-27, guiding the community through

the funding process and helping them develop strong proposals. Funding opportunities within the program include support for individual and team representation, community grants, environmental initiatives, sponsorships and the Graffiti Removal Grant. Together, these opportunities empower grassroots groups and local associations to deliver meaningful outcomes for the wider community.

Finally, in 2026-27, Council will develop a new Councillor Psychosocial Safety and Wellbeing Framework to better support Elected Members in the demanding environments they operate in. The framework will equip them with the tools, training and support they need to manage these pressures safely and effectively. By strengthening a culture of respect, resilience and wellbeing, the framework will help ensure Elected Members can continue to serve the community with confidence and care.

# MEASURES OF SUCCESS

These measures are indicators of success for the Governance objectives:



The community is satisfied that Council values and encourages their participation in Council activities and is committed to delivering the highest possible levels of service and community engagement



The community is satisfied that Council shows corporate and social responsibility, ensures the sustainability of assets and services, and plans effectively, reporting performance to the community



The community is satisfied that Council has the right systems and processes in place to deliver services to the community



Increase in website statistics



The community is satisfied that Council values its people and the culture of our organisation



Increase of email distribution list



Increase in engagement across social media channels



Increase in community consultation

*Pictured: Seniors day Rec Centre August 2025*



# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

As the Northern Territory's second-largest and fastest-growing city, Palmerston has rapidly transformed into a vibrant regional hub positioning itself as 'A Place for People' and the family city of the Territory. From its humble beginnings, it has grown into a diverse, multicultural community of more than 41,000 residents who enjoy green space alongside hotels, dining precincts, multiple shopping centres, a PGA-standard golf course, a swimming and fitness centre and numerous schools, all amenities that make Palmerston an attractive place for families to call home. This rapid growth also brings significant responsibility for Council, requiring thoughtful long-term planning that carefully considers the social impacts of development and strikes the right balance between sustainability and continued progress.



*Pictured: Staff member,  
City of Palmerston  
Library 2025*

## OPPORTUNITIES

Planning for growth, sustainability and regional positioning remains a central priority for the us as we work to accommodate increasing demand on local infrastructure and leverage our strategic location between Darwin and the rural area, close to major health, education and transport assets such as the port, railway, university campus, hospital and police station.

Our strategic planning framework focuses on Palmerston's long-term role in the region, ensuring that growth, environmental responsibility and economic opportunity are considered holistically while strengthening Council's advocacy position with other levels of government. This includes forward-looking governance and growth planning, sustainability initiatives that reduce long-term costs and environmental impact, and efforts to enhance Palmerston's profile as a destination for events, visitors and investment.

Palmerston's proximity to key industry growth sectors makes it an increasingly attractive location for businesses seeking to establish or expand. Council is committed to supporting this through collaborative partnerships, targeted infrastructure investment and strong relationships with the Northern Territory and Australian Governments. As Palmerston continues to grow, we remain focused on creating sustainable economic opportunities that support local enterprises, encourage investment, increase visitation and economic activity, and provide long-term employment prospects for our community.

## CHALLENGES

Palmerston's rapid population growth and ongoing development have created a set of challenges for Council, centred on the need to diversify the economy while managing increasing pressure on infrastructure and services.

Competition exists with nearby centres like Darwin and Coolalinga for investment, talent and retail activity. Palmerston's young and fast-growing population intensifies demand for community services and recreational facilities but also amplifies existing concerns about public safety, crime and antisocial behaviour, all issues highlighted by community stakeholders and through the annual Community Satisfaction Survey.

Council continues to advocate for residents and deliver programs that positively influence these concerns, such as youth initiatives, community events, improved laneway management and strong collaboration with government and key organisations, while recognising that immediate crime response and responsibility for core contributing factors sit with the Northern Territory Government.

We work closely with partners including Larrakia Nation, NT Police and the Department of Children and Families to help reduce antisocial behaviour and will continue strengthening these relationships while exploring opportunities to improve existing programs and develop new ones. By implementing recommendations from a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design approach, Council is delivering upgraded LED lighting and the reduction of blackspots across Palmerston. Ongoing collaboration with the Northern Territory Government also enables the delivery of security patrols in the city centre to directly target antisocial behaviour.

Ensuring community safety remains a priority. Council will continue advocating for the funding required to enhance safety through thoughtful design and city activation. Recognising the importance of a safe, vibrant and economically sustainable CBD, Council has long prioritised the revitalisation of the city centre, including Goyder Square, as an area facing challenges with crime, antisocial behaviour and underutilised public spaces, which are issues not unique to Palmerston. This work aligns with the Palmerston Local Economic Plan by providing insights into local business challenges and opportunities.

Finally, ongoing cost of living pressures continue to affect households and place upward pressure on Council's operating costs. While Council remains committed to delivering a balanced budget that aligns with community expectations for service delivery and affordability, we recognise that broader economic factors beyond our control are impacting both residents and operations. We will continue to closely monitor cost drivers in 2026-27, including fuel related impacts.

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



*Pictured: Puppy Live at the Lake June 2025*

## REVENUE STATEMENT

Council collects revenue from five main sources: general rates and waste management charges provide 87% of Council's revenue; and the remainder is provided by grants, fees and charges and investment income.

Council has increased the minimum rates by a moderate 4.9%-5.9%, with a 4.9% increase to the minimum rates for Residential, including Marlow Lagoon, and a 5.9% increase to the minimum for Commercial and Industrial. We continue to provide free parking and pool entry at SWELL and will maintain levels of service as we look for opportunities for continuous improvement and efficiency.

## VALUATION OF UNIMPROVED CAPITAL VALUES

City of Palmerston uses Unimproved Capital Value as the basis for all land valuations in the Palmerston area to determine the rates assessment. Unimproved Capital Value is the value of the land without any improvements.

The Valuer-General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics, sets the Unimproved Capital values of land. The value of land is reviewed by the Valuer-General every three years to take effect the following financial year. A revaluation occurred in July 2023 and was applied from the 2024-25 financial year.

Council plays no role in the valuation of the Unimproved Capital Value. If a ratepayer is dissatisfied with their valuation, it is a matter to raise with the Valuer-General. Rates must be paid in accordance with rate notices unless otherwise notified by Council.

All land within the Council area is rateable, except for lands specifically exempt (e.g. Crown Land). Where a service that is subject to a service charge is provided to non-rateable land, a service charge is levied against the land.

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF RATING POLICY

City of Palmerston is committed to levying rates in a consistent, transparent and equitable manner, while ensuring that financial and social considerations have been taken into account when determining the most appropriate rate mix. In 2019, Council's Community Reference Group on Rates Strategy determined that the rating system and methodology utilised at City of Palmerston should follow the principles of administrative

simplicity, economic efficiency and equity. The methodologies are easy to apply, understand and comply with. They make it difficult to avoid paying rates while being practical and cost-effective to administer. The rating methodology and rate mix consider and account for impacts of the rate burden between the differential categories and whether these will have a significant negative effect on economic behaviour. Considered fair and equitable, the methodology considers the benefits received by the ratepayer as well as their capacity to pay.

## CONCESSIONS

Eligible NT Concession card holders may be entitled to a concession on rates. City of Palmerston receives a list from the Northern Territory Government of all the ratepayers eligible for concession at the time of levying the rates, in which the rebate is deducted and noted on the annual rate notice. If a ratepayer becomes eligible part way through the rating year, they must pay the rates in full to Council and then contact the NT Concession and Recognition Unit to obtain a refund.

Contact details for the NT Concession and Recognition Unit are:

**Postal:** PO Box 3970 Darwin NT 0801

**Telephone:** 1800 777 704

**Email:** [ntconcessionandrecognition@nt.gov.au](mailto:ntconcessionandrecognition@nt.gov.au)

**Website:** <https://ntconcessions.nt.gov.au>

Applications for other concessions on rates and charges will be considered upon application to Council in line with Council's Rate Concession Policy.

## LATE PAYMENT OF RATES

Any ratepayer who may, or is likely to, have trouble meeting the standard instalments and due dates can contact City of Palmerston to discuss alternative payment arrangements. It should be noted that interest would still be levied in accordance with the Local Government Act under any payment arrangement. Council's determined interest for late payments will be imposed in accordance with the Local Government Act. Ratepayers can apply for a remission of interest under the Local Government Act provided they agree to a repayment arrangement to the satisfaction of City of Palmerston. Council has determined the interest rate for overdue rates will increase slightly to 11.4% per annum, in line with the Australian Tax Office rates. Pursuant to the Local Government Act, if rates have been in arrears for at least three years, Council may sell the land to recover unpaid rates and associated costs.

## FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

In times of financial hardship, Council offers a Rate Concession for residential and commercial ratepayers. Financial hardship is defined as a situation where a ratepayer is unable, due to illness, unemployment or other reasonable causes, to discharge their financial obligations towards City of Palmerston.

If you are experiencing any form of hardship that affects payment of rates or other charges applied by Council then we strongly urge you to contact us so that we can discuss options together and/or arrange a suitable payment plan.

City of Palmerston offers additional concessions and property owners can apply for more than one concession at a time. If you have any queries regarding your eligibility for any of the concessions, please contact us on (08) 8935 9961 or email: [rates@palmerston.nt.gov.au](mailto:rates@palmerston.nt.gov.au).

## FEES AND CHARGES

Council has made minimal changes to fees and charges for the 2026-27 year, while continuing to offer a wide range of free services such as parking, pool access and facility hire for community groups.

The Schedule of Fees and Charges can be viewed at Council's Civic Plaza, as well as on our website <https://palmerston.nt.gov.au/your-services/fees-and-charges>.

## RATES AND CHARGES

NT Planning Zone		Levied 2025-26	Budget 2026-27	Average Change
R, RR (Excluding RR in the suburb of Marlow Lagoon), SD, MD, MR, HR, CL, FD, PS, SP8, SP9 (<10,000m <sup>2</sup> ), SP9 (>20,000m <sup>2</sup> ), SP10 and SP11	Rate on UCV	0.6131300%	0.6431730%	-
	Minimum Rate	\$1,459.16	\$1,530.66	\$71.50
	No of Properties	14,232	14,596	-
	Estimated Income Rates	\$23,289,753	\$24,469,065	-
RR in the Suburb of Marlow Lagoon	Rate on UCV	0.503708%	0.528389%	-
	Minimum Rate	\$1,459.16	\$1,530.66	\$71.50
	No of Properties	251	251	-
	Estimated Income Rates	\$511,583	\$533,005	-
Industrial	Rate on UCV	0.582798%	0.623594%	-
	Minimum Rate	\$1,482.24	\$1,569.69	\$87.45
	No of Properties	496	496	-
	Estimated Income	\$2,907,856	\$3,072,712	-
All other rateable land	Rate on UCV	0.874333%	0.925919%	-
	Minimum Rate	\$1,482.24	\$1,569.69	\$87.45
	No of Properties	481	481	-
	Estimated Income	\$2,687,634	\$3,041,662	-

## WASTE SERVICE CHARGE

Council charges a fixed amount for waste management and collection, which is called a Waste Service Charge. Where multiple residential dwellings exist on the allotment of land, the charge is multiplied by the number of residential units on each allotment.

The Waste Service Charge is levied for the provision of a 120 litre twice weekly domestic collection, a fortnightly recycling 240 litre bin, free access to the Archer Waste Management Facility and providing waste management and cleaning services across Palmerston. Commercial use of Archer Recycling Centre and Waste Transfer Station is not supported as there is no direct waste charge against either commercial or industrial properties.

The Waste Service Charge for customers with a regular waste service will be charged at \$631 per household, which is a \$19 increase from prior years.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT CHARGE

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-34	2024-25	2025-26	Budget year 2026-27
Residential Kerbside Collection	\$480	\$480	\$527	\$557	\$612	\$631
Manual Service Collection (<25 units)	\$480	\$480	\$527	\$557	\$612	\$631
Multiple Dwelling (25 units +)**	\$240	\$240	\$264	\$279	\$308	\$320
Upgrade to 240L Annual Service Charge	\$149	\$149	\$167	\$174	\$179	\$188
Additional General Waste Kerbside Bin 120L*	\$250	\$256	\$274	\$294	\$316	\$332
Additional Recycling Kerbside Bin*	\$110	\$113	\$113	\$120	\$120	\$126
Additional General Waste Manual Bin*	\$290	\$297	\$318	\$339	\$362	\$380
Additional Recycling Manual Bin*	\$110	\$113	\$113	\$120	\$120	\$126

\*These are charge through Fees and Charges, not through Rates. These charges have increased based on contractual costs.

\*\*Council declares this charge where the number of residential dwellings exceeds 25 and the property has its own alternative regular waste collection service.

# STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

	2025-26	2026-27
\$'000's	Revised Budget	Budget
<b>Operating Income</b>		
Rates & annual charges	37,909	40,556
Rates	28,976	31,116
Waste	8,932	9,439
Statutory Charges	109	715
User charges & fees	1,160	414
Interest & investment revenue	1,742	1,192
Other revenues	42	60
Grants & contributions for operating purposes	2,311	3,857
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>43,272</b>	<b>46,795</b>
<b>Operating Expenditure</b>		
Employee benefits & costs	13,547	13,818
Borrowing costs	310	294
Elected Member Allowances	474	576
Elected Member Expenses	383	43
Materials, contracts and other expenses	26,180	26,001
Depreciation	12,306	13,312
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>53,199</b>	<b>54,043</b>
<b>BUDGET OPERATING SURPLUS /(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(9,927)</b>	<b>(7,248)</b>
Add: Amounts received specifically for new or upgraded assets	2,776	1,238
Add: Physical resources received free of charge (non-cash)	3,000	3,000
<b>BUDGET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(4,151)</b>	<b>(3,010)</b>
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME / (LOSS)</b>	<b>(4,151)</b>	<b>(3,010)</b>
Add: Depreciation	12,306	13,312
Add: Other non-cash	-	-
Less: Resources free of charge	3,000	3,000
Less: Capital Expenditure	11,400	9,416
Add: Borrowings (Loans advances)	-	3,000
Less: Loan Repayments	512	565
Add: Net Reserve Transfers	6,757	(321)
<b>NET CASH BUDGET SURPLUS /(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

## CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING BUDGET

2026-27	
\$'000's	
<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</b>	
Land & Buildings	\$4,486,455
Infrastructure (including roads, footpaths, park furniture)	\$3,049,637
Public Lighting	\$461,260
Fleet	\$411,200
Other Assets (including furniture & office equipment)	\$1,007,900
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$9,416,452</b>

## TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDED BY

2026-27	
\$'000's	
<b>FUNDED BY</b>	
Operating Income	\$4,683,260
Sales of Assets (including trade-ins)	\$150,000
Capital Grants	\$888,192
Transfers from Cash Reserves	\$695,000
Borrowings	\$3,000,000
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDING</b>	<b>\$9,416,452</b>

*Pictured: Staff members,  
November 2024*



## PLANNED MAJOR CAPITAL WORKS BUDGET

Class of Assets	By Major Capital Project	Toal prior year(s) actual	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget	Expected Project Completion Date
<b>Buildings</b>	Aquatic Centre Capital Renewals		\$72,227.82	\$74,250	2026-27
	Archer Waste Management Facility Capital Renewals		\$20,000.00	\$20,000	2026-27
	Civic Plaza Capital Renewals		\$179,920.00	\$184,958	2026-27
	Depot Capital Renewals		\$14,745.60	\$15,158	2026-27
	Driver Resource Centre Capital Renewals		\$10,240.00	\$10,527	2026-27
	Durack Community Arts Centre Capital Renewals		\$9,267.20	\$9,527	2026-27
	Library Capital Renewals		\$105,984.00	\$108,952	2026-27
	Recreation Centre Capital Renewals		\$105,984.00	\$108,952	2026-27
	60 Georgina Cres - Building renewal			\$10,527	2026-27
	Odegaard Drive Building Capital Works			\$37,125	2026-27
	SWELL Café/Airconditioning			\$75,000	2026-27
	Gray Community Hall Renewals			\$20,480	2026-27
	Exeloo Renewal			\$15,000	2026-27
	<b>Parks &amp; Reserves</b>	Play Space Renewals and Upgrades		\$650,000.00	\$565,400
Tree planting & Replacement			\$150,000.00	\$54,200	2026-27
Creative Industries			\$100,000.00	\$51,400	2026-27
Irrigation Refurbishment			\$220,000.00	\$214,960	2026-27
Marlow Lagoon Masterplan				\$75,000	2026-27
<b>Furniture &amp; Fittings</b>	IT Projects		\$153,600.00	\$157,901	2026-27
	ERP software	\$938,400	\$350,000.00	\$350,000	2026-27
<b>Ancillary Roads</b>	Driveway Renewals		\$53,248.00	\$54,739	2026-27
	Laneway Renewals		\$51,200.00	\$52,634	2026-27
	Pathway Renewals		\$122,880.00	\$126,321	2026-27
	New Driveways		\$200,000.00	\$200,000	2026-27
	New Pathways		\$180,000.00	\$92,520	2026-27
<b>Roads</b>	All Ability Access		\$60,000.00	\$30,840	2026-27
	Bitumen Reseal & Asphalt Overlay Program		\$1,383,944.22	\$1,540,409	2026-27
	Road Safety Program		\$60,000.00	\$61,680	2026-27
	Road Reconstruction		\$450,000.00	\$450,000	2026-27
<b>Public Lighting</b>	Public Lighting Upgrades (Dark Spots)		\$250,000.00	\$128,500	2026-27
	Public Lighting Renewals		\$61,440.00	\$63,160	2026-27
	Sustainability Programs (Solar Panels & LEDs)		\$100,000.00	\$269,600	2026-27
<b>Stormwater</b>	Storm water Renewals & Upgrades		\$204,800.00	\$210,534	2026-27
<b>Vehicles</b>	Fleet Replacement		\$400,000.00	\$411,200	2026-27
<b>Major Projects</b>	Animal Management Facility		\$350,000.00	\$50,000	2028-29
	Zuccoli Community Hub	\$227,315.26	\$450,000.00	\$3,000,000	2028-29

\*Major projects that continue over 2 years. All other projects are programs expected to be completed within the 2026-27 financial year

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2025-26	2026-27
\$'000's	Revised Budget	Budget
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4,000	4,000
Investments	9,307	9,556
Receivables	2,163	2,339
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>15,471</b>	<b>15,895</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
Infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	570,938	570,043
Investment property	6,200	6,200
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>577,138</b>	<b>576,243</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>592,609</b>	<b>592,138</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Payables	5,173	5,333
Borrowings	520	495
Provisions	1,079	1,111
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>6,771</b>	<b>6,939</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>		
Payables	-	-
Borrowings	4,161	6,435
Provisions	2,443	2,541
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>	<b>6,604</b>	<b>8,976</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>13,375</b>	<b>15,915</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>579,234</b>	<b>576,224</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained earnings/(accumulated deficit)	230,673	227,343
Other Reserves	8,370	8,691
Revaluation Reserves	340,190	340,190
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>579,233</b>	<b>576,223</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2025-26	2026-27
\$'000's	Revised Budget	Budget
<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>		
<b>Receipts:</b>		
Rates & waste charges	40,903	40,380
User charges & fees	1,269	1,129
Investment & interest revenue received	1,742	1,192
Grants & contributions	2,311	3,857
Other	42	260
<b>Payments:</b>		
Employee benefits & costs	(13,199)	(13,688)
Materials, contracts & other expenses	(30,763)	(26,459)
Finance Payments	(310)	(294)
<b>NET CASH PROVIDED (OR USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>1,995</b>	<b>6,378</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>		
<b>Receipts:</b>		
Sale of investment securities	7,547	-
Amounts specifically for new or upgraded assets	2,626	888
<b>Payments:</b>		
Purchase of investment securities	-	(249)
Purchase of infrastructure, property, plant & equipment	(11,400)	(9,416)
<b>NET CASH PROVIDED (OR USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>(1,077)</b>	<b>(8,627)</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>		
<b>Receipts:</b>		
Proceeds from borrowings & deposits	-	3,000
<b>Payments:</b>		
Repayment of borrowings & advances	(512)	(751)
<b>NET CASH PROVIDED (OR USED IN) FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>(512)</b>	<b>2,249</b>
<b>NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>-</b>
plus: CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS - beginning of year	3,594	4,000
<b>TOTAL CASH AT BANK</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>
plus: INVESTMENTS ON HAND - beginning of year	16,854	9,307
<b>NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN INVESTMENTS ON HAND</b>	<b>(7,547)</b>	<b>249</b>
<b>TOTAL INVESTMENTS ON HAND</b>	<b>9,307</b>	<b>9,556</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH &amp; CASH EQUIVALENT &amp; INVESTMENTS - end of year</b>	<b>13,307</b>	<b>13,556</b>
<b>NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH, CASH EQUIVALENTS &amp; INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>(7,141)</b>	<b>249</b>

## FINANCIAL RATIOS

		2025-26	2026-27
	Benchmark	Revised Budget	Budget
<b>Operating ratio</b>			
This ratio measures Council's ability to contain operating expenditure within operating revenue.	Greater than 0%	6.21%	13.59%
<b>Cash Expense Cover Ratio</b>			
This ratio indicates the number of months Council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow.	3 months	3.93	4.02
<b>Current Ratio</b>			
This ratio represents Council's ability to meet debt payments as they fall due. It should be noted that Council's externally restricted assets will not be available as operating funds and as such can significantly impact Council's ability to meet its liabilities.	1.5 times	2.28	2.29
<b>Own Revenue</b>			
This ratio measures the level of Council's fiscal flexibility. It is the degree of reliance on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions. Council's financial flexibility improves the higher the level of its own source revenue.	Between 60%-75%	95%	92%
Own funding/total operating revenue.			
<b>Debt Service Cover Ratio</b>			
This ratio measures the availability of cash to service debt including interest, principal, and lease payments.	Greater than 2.0	3.24	8.07
<b>Interest Cover Ratio</b>			
This ratio indicates the extent to which Council can service its interest-bearing debt and take on additional borrowings. It measures the burden of the current interest expense upon Council's operating cash.	Greater than 4.0	8.68	21.66
<b>Asset Sustainability Ratio</b>			
This ratio indicates the extent to which Council is replacing its existing asset base with capital renewals of existing assets.	Between 89%-110%	75%	75%

## PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

	Capital Cost
<b>Initiatives to commence in 2026-27</b>	
Recreation Centre Airconditioning replacement	\$500,000
Aquatic Centre – Other structure	\$52,000
Offsite back up	\$21,600
CBD Parking Signage Renewal	\$15,000
Councillor Psychological Safety and Wellbeing Framework	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$598,600</b>

## STATEMENT OF RESERVES

Reserve	Expected opening balance as at 1 July 2026	Budget transfer to reserves	Budget transfer from reserves	Projected Reserve balance as at 30 June 2027
<b>\$'000</b>				
<b>Internally Restricted Reserves</b>				
Election reserves	-	88	-	88
Disaster recovery	-	-	-	-
Waste	2,229	-	(192)	2,036
Developer Funds In Lieu Of Construction	2,566	272	-	2,838
Major initiative	-	-	-	-
<b>Unrestricted Reserves</b>				
Working Capital	3,576	578	(425)	3,729
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>8,370</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>(617)</b>	<b>8,691</b>



*Pictured: Youth Festival team  
Geekfest Day 2 July 2025*

